

2024 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 142

BY SENATOR HARRIS

JUDGES. Reestablishes the Judicial Structure Task Force to study the funding and workload of judicial district and circuit courts.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To reestablish the Judicial Structure Task Force created by House Resolution No. 30 of the  
3 2022 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

4 WHEREAS, the Judicial Structure Task Force was created by House Resolution No.  
5 30 of the 2022 Regular Session to study the caseload data and the number of judges of each  
6 appellate court and district court in Louisiana, to determine changes necessary to the existing  
7 structure of the judiciary, and to provide the most efficient use of judicial resources; and

8 WHEREAS, House Concurrent Resolution No. 143 of the 2011 Regular Session of  
9 the Legislature of Louisiana requested the supreme court to study the structure of the  
10 judiciary; and

11 WHEREAS, the task force has met twelve times since its inception to determine the  
12 efficient methodology and approach for the district courts weighted caseload study; and

13 WHEREAS, the National Center for State Courts developed a work point study to  
14 assess the workload of district and appellate courts throughout the state; and

15 WHEREAS, an updated work point study is needed to accurately assess the structure  
16 and workload of the judiciary; and

17 WHEREAS, the release of the detailed 2020 federal decennial census data on August  
18 12, 2021, revealed serious population losses in some parts of the state and tremendous

1 population growth in other parts of the state; and

2 WHEREAS, as population shifts from some areas of this state to others, it would be  
3 prudent to examine the caseload data from each court in the state of Louisiana to determine  
4 if the judicial resources are being used in the most efficient manner possible; and

5 WHEREAS, population and demographic changes in the state of Louisiana provide  
6 a reassessment opportunity to determine if reallocation of judicial resources may be needed;  
7 and

8 WHEREAS, it is of utmost importance to consider the case filing data, case weights,  
9 court structure and finance, and the use of support personnel in order to establish proper  
10 funding and distribution of such funds to the courts; and

11 WHEREAS, the legislature will be unable to appropriate such funds as are necessary  
12 for the judicial system without receiving proper and sufficient data to support such an  
13 appropriation; and

14 WHEREAS, it is also necessary to study the territorial boundaries and the  
15 jurisdictional limits of each court.

16 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
17 does hereby continue the Judicial Structure Task Force to study the funding and workload  
18 of judicial districts and circuits, and to propose recommendations with specific proposals for  
19 legislation, by written report to the Senate and to the David R. Poynter Legislative Research  
20 Library as required by R.S. 24:771 and 772, no later than February 1, 2025.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force's study include consideration of  
22 the caseload data and the number of judges of each appellate court and district court in  
23 Louisiana and provide the most efficient use of judicial resources.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be composed of the  
25 following members:

26 (1) Three members of the House Committee on Appropriations appointed by the  
27 speaker of the House of Representatives.

28 (2) Three members of the House Committee on Judiciary appointed by the speaker  
29 of the House of Representatives.

30 (3) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the

1 House of Representatives.

2 (4) The chief justice of the Supreme Court, or his designee.

3 (5) The chair of the Louisiana Conference of Court of Appeals Judges, or his  
4 designee.

5 (6) Two judges, at least one of whom serves in a judicial district composed of two  
6 or more parishes, who are members of the Louisiana District Judges Association selected  
7 by the president of the association.

8 (7) One judge who is a member of the Louisiana Judicial Council of the National Bar  
9 Association.

10 (8) Four members of the Senate and one judge appointed by the president of the  
11 Senate.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall have all powers otherwise  
13 provided by law and by rules of the Senate, as well as all powers inherent in legislative  
14 committees, and that the legislative members shall receive the per diem and mileage  
15 authorized by law and in accordance with the rules of the member's house of the legislature.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a member of the Senate on the task force  
17 designated by the president of the Senate shall serve as the chairman of the task force and  
18 that the members of the task force shall select any other officers it deems necessary from  
19 among its members at the first meeting of the task force.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chairman of the task force shall cause notice  
21 of each meeting of the task force to be provided to the president of the Senate and the  
22 chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana directs  
24 the task force to solicit input, information, data, recommendations, and advice from the  
25 following persons, agencies, and organizations in connection with the study directed by this  
26 Resolution:

27 (1) Louisiana Supreme Court.

28 (2) Louisiana District Judges Association.

29 (3) Louisiana Clerks of Court Association.

30 (4) Louisiana District Attorneys Association.

- 1           (5)    Office of the state public defender.
- 2           (6)    Louisiana State Bar Association.
- 3           (7)    Louisiana Association for Justice.
- 4           (8)    National Center for State Courts.
- 5           (9)    Louisiana Association of Business & Industry.
- 6           (10)   Louisiana Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.
- 7           (11)   Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel.
- 8           (12)   Any persons, agencies, entities, or stakeholders that the joint committee
- 9                 deems necessary to fulfill its purposes.

10           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force may seek staff assistance and  
11   advice from the office of the judicial administrator for the Louisiana Supreme Court.

12           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a written report of  
13   its findings and recommendations to the Senate Committee on Finance not later than  
14   February 1, 2025, and that such recommendations shall include the following:

- 15           (1)    An updated work point study from the National Center for State Courts.
- 16           (2)    Data from the National Center for State Courts on district court work flow.
- 17           (3)    The caseload data of each appellate court and district court in Louisiana.
- 18           (4)    The number of judges in each appellate court and district court in Louisiana.
- 19           (5)    A determination of any necessary changes to the existing structure of the
- 20                 judiciary.
- 21           (6)    A determination of the most efficient use of judicial resources.

22           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
23   chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance, the president of the Senate, the chief justice  
24   of the Louisiana Supreme Court, the chair of the Louisiana Conference of Court of Appeals  
25   Judges, and the president of the Louisiana District Judges Association.

26           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that one print copy and one electronic copy of any  
27   report produced pursuant to this Resolution shall be submitted to the David R. Poynter  
28   Legislative Research Library as required by R.S. 24:772.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Hanna Gettys.

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SR 142 Original

DIGEST  
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Harris

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